

*Study: Majority of Students Cite Poor School Response to Stress, Knowledge of Student Victims Who Suffered Serious Consequences Due to Stress*

WASHINGTON D.C. (Today) – In response to the historic passage of health care reform, Rep. Honda's Student Advisory Council (SAC) – established to empower the youth voice in California's 15th District—will focus on student mental health issues at their Annual Youth Conference. This year's conference, entitled "Stressbusters," takes place at Cupertino City Hall on Sunday, May 16, from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at 10300 Torre Ave. in Cupertino, California.

SAC representatives believe a discussion on the impact of declining mental wellness among young people is extremely relevant in the health care debate. "Stressbusters" will address a gamut of issues - the contributing social factors to student stress, how to deal with stress positively and the role that school administrators should play in creating a healthy, supportive learning environment. "As our country experiences sweeping changes in our health care system," said Rep. Honda, "a youth conference that provides a student perspective on the health care issue is extremely necessary."

SAC representatives randomly surveyed 180 students from different schools within the 15th Congressional District in preparation for the conference. The findings are startling:

- Over 60% said that the school does not take effective measures to deal with student stress.
- 75% said that the stress they face develops from the pressure of school and school-related activities.
- 68% claimed to know someone who has suffered serious consequences as a result of the stress in their lives.

The students will be releasing a thorough report discussing survey results in detail and providing additional information about stress experienced by youth.

"Based on a survey that SAC conducted, students across the district agree that schools aren't providing enough support and resources to address the increasing stress and mental health problems," said Robert Kang, a student co-chair of SAC's Public Relations Committee, "problems that greatly affect [student's] lives and could carry on to our college experience if not addressed now."

As the incidence of mental health conditions continue to grow, it is important for students to be included in finding comprehensive solutions to such problems. Rep. Honda encourages all students, parents and teachers to actively participate in this pertinent and timely discussion. This year's conference will give community members an opportunity to provide suggestions on how teachers, administrators, parents and students can proactively work together to address these issues.

"As a former teacher, principal and school board member, I recognize the growing problems with mental health in today's youth," said Rep. Honda, "Because the incidence of stress,

depression and other mental health conditions are increasing rapidly, it is critical that we work together to find solutions so that students struggling with mental health problems can receive the help they need sooner than later.”

*The Student Advisory Council (SAC), which Representative Honda established in 2001 to ensure a student perspective and to encourage civic engagement, welcomes 31 students who represent each high school in California's 15th Congressional District. The student-run council is committed to public service, community outreach, and offers feedback to Representative Honda on important issues affecting youth in the local community. SAC was created to foster leadership, civic engagement, responsibility and intellectual dialogue among young people.*